



News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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News Release No. AK 04-23
Date: Sept. 23, 2004

BLM awards petroleum reserve leases

The Bureau of Land Management has officially awarded oil and gas leases to the five companies that submitted winning bids at the June 2004 National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska lease sale. On June 2, the companies submitted bonus bids totaling \$53,904,491 to win the rights to develop oil and gas leases on 1,403,561 acres. During the 90 days following the sale, the Minerals Management Service (MMS) analyzed the bids so that BLM could formally accept or reject the bids and award the leases.

In addition, the companies have paid the first year's lease payments of \$4,210,683. All the money collected is deposited with MMS in Denver, Colorado, to be split 50-50 between the State of Alaska and the U.S. Treasury, probably in April.

"I am excited about the validation of the bids and the fact that we have some new players in the petroleum reserve. Developing these leases will help extend the life of the trans-Alaska pipeline and help support the quality of life we have in America," said BLM Alaska State Director Henri Bisson.

Leasees include Anadarko Petroleum Corporation., ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc., Pioneer Natural Resources Alaska Inc., Petro-Canada (Alaska) Inc., and Fortuna Exploration LLC.

The companies will work with local BLM offices to get appropriate permits for exploring 123 tracts located in the northwest and a portion of the northeast planning areas of the reserve. All energy leases will be subject to strict environmental standards. A court case challenging the adequacy of the land use plan is still pending in federal district court; a ruling is expected later this fall.

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